

LESSON THREE: Note-Taking

LESSON DESCRIPTION

Students focus on various methods and formats for taking notes, how to determine which note-taking method works best depending on purpose, and how to distinguish relevant from irrelevant information in order to take effective notes.

GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

W3B Select and use an appropriate method of **note-taking**

IL1 Record relevant information using a variety of note-taking or organizational strategies

LESSON MATERIALS

- Source of Literature
 - *Two Non-fiction articles related to adventure*
- Supplies
 - Examples of student notes (webbing notes, combination notes, and informal outline notes)
 - Chalkboard/overhead projector
- Handouts provided
- Words to know
 - note-taking

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT ASSESSMENT SCORING GUIDE

After reading nonfiction articles, students are asked to decide the most appropriate note-taking method to record relevant information needed to generate a summary of the article. Students justify their choice of the note-taking method.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

1. Ask students to give an example of time in their lives or instances when they have needed to make notes for themselves. List on the board. Asks students to study them looking for commonalities and lead students to identify the purposes of note-taking. Discuss the purposes of note-taking: to remember, to record important ideas, and to create a product.

Questions for students	When do you make notes to yourself or take notes? What kinds of notes do you make and why? What is the purpose of taking notes? How can notes be arranged/organized? Are any particular formats more useful than others? What helps you determine what format to use when writing notes?
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2. Model the informal outline note-taking procedure with students by reading with or to them a short selection related to the adventure theme. The article should lend itself to easy note-taking. (It has a clearly stated main idea and supporting details). After reading, on an overhead projector, record informal outline notes on the selection as students watch you work. Discuss the notes you made, including how you determined relevant information to record in note-taking.
3. Model the webbing note-taking procedure in the same way using information from the same passage. Discuss the notes you made and your thinking as you decided how to relate ideas from the passage to each other in your web.
4. Model the combination note-taking procedure using information from the same passage.

Strategy **Informal Outline Method of Taking Notes:** uses indentation to indicate major ideas and their related details.

The Circulatory System
One of the transport of the body
3 functions
carries food and oxygen to cells
carries away wastes from cells
protects the body from disease

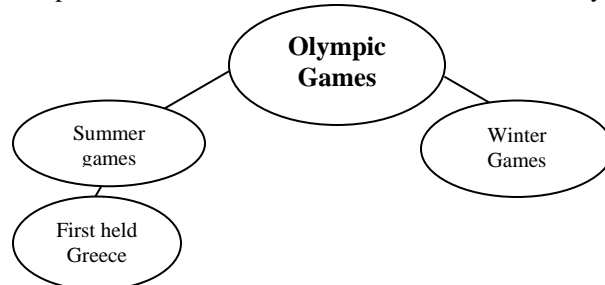
3parts
Heart
Blood vessels
Blood

One of the parts of the circulatory system is blood

4 parts
Plasma
Red blood cells
White blood cells
Platelets

All note-taking procedures are from *Classroom Instruction That Works: Research-Based Strategies for Increasing Student Achievement* by Robert Marzano, Debra Pickering, and Jane Pollock, McRell, 2001

Strategy **Webbing Method of Taking Notes:** uses the relative size of circles to indicate the importance of ideas and lines to indicate relationships. The more important ideas have larger circles than the less important ideas. Lines from one circle to another indicate that the concepts in the connected circles are related in some way.



Strategy **Combination Method Taking Notes:** employs both the informal outline and web note-taking formats: thus it is referred to as the combination method of note-taking. Each page of notes is divided into three parts by a line running down the middle of the page and a horizontal line near the bottom of the page. The left-hand side of the page is reserved for notes taken using the informal outline note-taking method or a variation of it. The right-hand side of the page is reserved for notes taken using webbing or some variation of that note-taking method. A strip across the bottom of the page is reserved for summary statement.

Informal outline notes

Webbing notes

Summary

5. Review with students the three different sets of notes made from the same reading passage, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each. Discuss when or for what purpose each might be best.

Questions for students How are the note-taking methods similar? Different?
What are the strengths of each note-taking method studied? Weaknesses?
For what purpose or task might each note-taking method be used?

6. Demonstrate to students various methods of sorting relevant information from irrelevant or trivial information. For example, complete a graphic organizer listing the main idea of a passage/paragraph and the supporting details for that. Another method would be to highlight in the passage (on an overhead) the main idea/topic sentence and supporting details. Discuss with students that a passage may contain very interesting details. These provide additional information that makes a passage easier to understand or causes it to more thoroughly address a topic but that information isn't necessarily the most important.

Strategy Note that it may be helpful when identifying main ideas to review that the topic sentence which is often the first sentence in a paragraph. Pay close attention to text features, such as bold words, subtitles, headings, graphics, etc. which may help identify the main ideas.

7. Provide students with a short nonfiction passage related to adventure and have them read it. Divide students into groups of three, having each student in each group use a different note-taking method (one of the three discussed in class) to record relevant information related to the content of the passage. When all are finished, students share and discuss their notes. Compare all three sets of notes to determine how effective each person was in capturing relevant information.

Questions for students Which note-taking method worked best to record relevant information and why?
Which note-taking method worked best based on the content of the nonfiction passage and why?